loss of about 10,000 crore of rupees due to loss of property;

(b) whether it is also a fact that 80% of such accidents are due to rash, careless, drunken and reckless driving; and

(c) what effective steps and stringent measures Government propose to take to save this colossal loss of life and property?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKAT-RAMAN): (a) As per provisional figures available, about 70,000 people are killed and more than three lakh injured in road accidents in the country in a year. The total economic loss on account of road accidents is reported to be over Rs. 5000 crore,

(b) Majority of road accidents are due to drivers fault, passengers fault, mechanical defects in the vehicles, bad roads, bad weather, etc.

(c) The Government is taking a number of measures to inculcate road safety consciousness among the people through various publicity measures. Different types of road safety equipments have been supplied to the State Governments to reduce road accidents and a National Highway Patrolling Scheme has been introduced to provide emergency medical assistance to accident victims and to remove damaged vehicles from the National Highways. Besides, periodical instructions-guidelines are issued to the State Governments for taking effective measures to reduce road accidents and for strict implementation of various provisions of Motor Vehicles Act. The primary responsibility to take measures to reduce road accidents lies with the State Governments who are vested with necessary enforcement powers.

Plan to build an outer express way in the National Capital Region»

898. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a plan to build an outer express way connecting important towns of the National Capital Region;

(b) if so, the physical and financial details thereof;

(c) whether an alternative plan has been suggested by some N.G.O.S.;

(d) if so, the comparative details thereof;

(e) whether Government would like to consider this alternative plan; and

(f) by when a decision is expected to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKAT-RAMAN): (a) to (f) The Central' Government is primarily responsible for the development and maintenance of National Highways only. The proposed Outer Expressway does not form part of the National Highway Network and hence it is the responsibility of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD).

The Govt, of NCTD is presently examining the feasibility of providing an Outer Expressway (Peripheral Expressway) in Delhi. The Study is in its initial stages. Some suggestion from individual^. G.Os have also been received. The alignment of the Outer expressway has not yet been finalised. It is too early to indicate any time frame at this stage**.**

Express ways in Gujarat

899. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Express Way (EW) are being provided in Gujarat with Central assistance;

(b) if so, the details of the Express Ways projects under construction in the State as on date;

(c) the funds released to the State for EWs during the last three years, year-wise, with details of EW constructed during the said period; and

(d) the steps being taken to complete the EW projects in the State within the time frame?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) Ahmedabad-Vadodara Expressway, having a length of about 93.30 km. in the Gujarat State, stands sanctioned with the budgetary support of the Central Government. The physical progress of the project achieved is 62.42%.

(c) Funds released to the State are as under:—

1994-95	:	Rs. 20.85 crores
1995-96	:	Rs. 13.83 crores
1996-97	:	Rs. 11.33 crores

The Road works are standstill since December, 1994 due to contractual problems, while the Bridge works are in progress and are targetted to be completed by December, 1998.

(d) Efforts are being made to complete the balance work under B.O.T. (Build-Operate-Transfer) basis within the stipulated period of 1999-2000.

Accidents on Highways

900. SHRI LAKKHIRAM AGARWAL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of total accidents on Highways of the country during 1994-95, 1996-97 till April;

(b) the factors of these accidents;

(c) the steps taken to avoid accidents so far; and

(d) the action taken on Ved Marwah Report on measures to reduce road accidents by public transport buses in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) to (d) the information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Recommendations of IMO on bulk carriers

901. SHRI SUNDER SINGH BHANDARI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) how many bulk carriers are of more than 20 years;

(b) how many of them have shipwrecked indicating of each accident; and

(c) the recommendations of IMO that have been accepted by Government?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) There are 39 bulk carriers of over 20 years age in the Indian Registry as on 31.3.1977.

(b) Only one Indian bulk carrier named m.v. Continental Lotus of 1964 has shipwrecked since 1991.

(c) The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has already adopted a Resolution No. 744(18) in respect of enhanced survey programmes for bulk carriers. This Resolution has been incorporated in the Solas Convention 1974 as Chapter XI and has come into force from 1.1.1996. Under the provision of this Resolution, all the Indian bulk carriers are being subjected to enhanced survey requirements